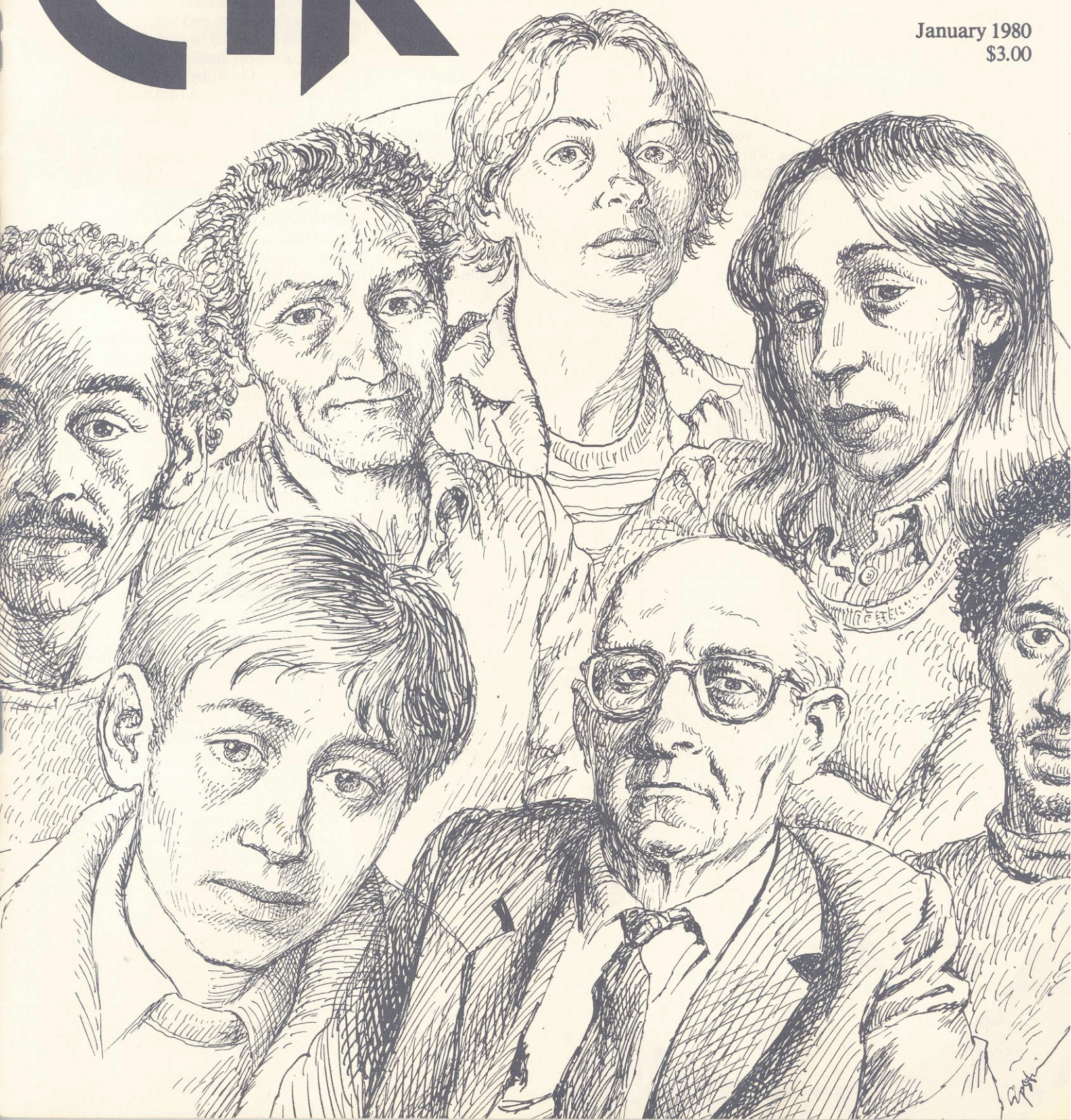


CR

Community Television Review

Local Programming:
By the Community, For the Community

January 1980
\$3.00



Calendar

January, 1980, Third season showings of Independent Focus, local acquisition series of WNET/13, New York. Contact Mark N. Weiss, Coordinating Producer, Independent Focus, Acquisitions Dep't, WNET/13, 356 West 58th Street, New York, NY 10019.

January 13-16, Association of Independent Television Stations (INTV) convention, Galleria Plaza, Houston, TX.

January 13-17, Program Fair of Annual Public Broadcasting Service Programming Conference, San Francisco. Public television programming officials will screen tapes in preparation for bidding in Station Program Cooperative. Independent Producers may submit tapes for screening.

January 16-17, First Amendment Congress, sponsored by 12 organizations, including National Association of Broadcasters, Radio-Television News Directors Association and Society of Professional Journalists, Sigma Delta Chi, Hall of Congress, Philadelphia.

January 31, Film Fund, application deadline. Contact Jennifer Lawson, Film Fund, 80 E. 11th Street, New York, NY 10003, (212) 475-3720.

February 1, National Endowment for the Humanities, Challenge Grant Program. Applicants who did not submit draft proposals during Fall, 1979 should send notice of intent, describing project, giving amount to be requested, and naming who will be handling proposal. Contact NEH Challenge Grant Program, 806 15th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20506, (202) 724-0267.

February 2-3, NFLCP Board of Directors meeting, Washington, D.C. To submit agenda items, contact Don R. Smith, Chair, NFLCP, 4212 Morning-side Dr., Bloomington, IN 47401, (812) 339-2271.

February 19, Deadline for reply comments in FCC notice of inquiry into TV waveform standards for horizontal/vertical blanking intervals. (Docket 79-368).

February 20-23, Texas Cable Television Association annual convention, San Antonio Convention Center, San Antonio, TX.

February 24-26, North Central Cable Association annual convention, Hilton Hotel, Des Moines, Iowa.

March 12-15, Eighth Conference on Visual Anthropology, Temple University, Philadelphia. For scholars, photographers, film and videomakers, and others interested in exploring the human condition through visual means. Write Jay Ruby, Director, COVA-80, Department of Anthropology, Temple Univ., Phila., PA 19122, (215) 787-1414 or 787-7513.

March 16-18, First Amendment Congress, Williamsburg, VA. (see Jan. 16-17 listing)

March 20-23, Conference of the Society for Cinema Studies, Syracuse University. Contact Owen Shapiro, College of Visual and Performing Arts, Syracuse Univ., Syracuse, NY 13210.

March 26-28, Viewdata 80, international exhibition and conference on video-based systems and microcomputer industries, sponsored by British Post Office, Wembley Conference Center, London.

May 18-21, National Cable Television Association Annual Convention, Convention Center, Dallas, TX.

May 28-30, Visual Communications Congress, New York Hilton. Exhibits, seminars, and workshops. Write VCC, 475 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016, (212) 725-2300

June 3-7, 29th Annual Convention, American Women in Radio and Television. Hilton Palacio del Rio and San Antonio Marriott, San Antonio, TX.

June 14-16, Conference on "Media, Messages and Networking: Communicating for Social Change", George Washington University, Washington, D.C. Write Kathy Kinsella, Institute for Policy Studies, 1901 Que Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009, (202) 234-9382.

If you know of upcoming conferences, meetings, festivals, screenings, grant deadlines, FCC rulemakings, or other special events, please tell us about them. Send all information to CTR Calendar, P.O. Box 253, Montpelier, VT 05602.

A Publication
of the National
Federation of Local
Cable Programmers
**Community
Television
Review**
Volume 3 No. 1

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Letters to the Editors...

To the Editor:

For our community of the Park Cities, Cable TV is almost a reality. It is currently being constructed and will be into the first homes in January 1980.

The eight churches and the community organizations here are trying to organize to have a continuing input and feedback (as well as local origination programming) with the cable company, since there will be no "Citizens' Advisory Committee" blessed by the City Fathers.

We understand that many of your readers have "plowed new ground" in this area of working with the community, and we need to know whatever they can share with us in this regard. Also any other models or information they can point us to will be appreciated. We are building from "ground zero" and any information will be that much to the good.

Rev. Ed Deane

Director of Communications

Highland Park United Methodist Church

3300 Mockingbird Lane, Dallas, TX 75205

To the Editor:

Many thanks for the fast service mailing the extra copies of CTR for the Minnesota Cable Communications Board meeting last Friday. The copies came in the mail that day. I was able to distribute them to the Board members during the lunch break.

I would like to be able to say CTR influenced the Board's vote on public access that day but unfortunately it didn't. The Board voted to eliminate public access as a requirement for systems of less than 1000 subscribers although a cable channel is still required for educational and government (institutions) access.

The rulemaking next proceeds to the State Hearing Examiner who is scheduled to hold a hearing January 7, 1980. All written comments become a part of the record so anyone who wishes to comment is encouraged to do so.

Your quick action is much appreciated.

Anne T. Davis

St. Paul, Minnesota

The Community Television Review is a quarterly publication of the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers. Subscriptions, memberships and inquiries, send to: NFLCP, P.O. Box 832, Dubuque, IA 52001. Letters to the Editor and other editorial material, send to: CTR, P.O. Box 253, Montpelier, VT 05602.

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Federation Trunkline

by Susan Bednarczyk

In a recent survey sent out to a number of video centers we've found out the names of those stalwarts who are regular contributors to community programming in their cities.

St. Louis, Mo.: DOUBLE HELIX CORP.'s General Mgr. JERRY UPHAM says that major cable companies are "salivating over the St. Louis market" right now. DH is heavily involved in community radio, but videotapes done by DH supporters are also finding their way to the local PBS outlet for broadcasting. Most active producers are MoPIRG, Citizens for Community Development, ERIC VON SCHRADER, JOHN MONDELLO, and MARK SILVERMAN.

Columbus, Ind.: According to SUSAN TENER, "Skateboard '78" drew the most response of any cable access show made in the past year. Primary producers on Channel 4 of VIDEO ACTION CENTER are the Quinco Consulting Center (series on divorce, parenting, etc.), the local children's librarian (story time), religious groups, local schools, and the parks department.

New Orleans, La.: NEW ORLEANS VIDEO ACCESS CENTER (NOVAC) continues to spark local interest with their documentary series "Being Poor in New Orleans", part of their well-known Survival Information TV Project. Exec. Dir. BURWELL WARE named his co-production with EDDIE KURTZ and KAREN KERN "Body Shop" as the best recent NOVAC tape broadcast over WYES-TV. WARE also noted that JASON BERRY and the Coalition for Action were also frequent users of NOVAC facilities.

Abilene, Kansas: The relatively new access operation in Abilene's Public Library received good community response on local specials featuring community members, plays by Middle School, Public Policy Forum tapes produced by AFI, and a tape on the Abilene Fair Parade. Director of PATV, SR. MICHAEL ANN MC KENNA relates that the organizations making greatest use of access are Abilene Recreational Center, Kansas



Power and Light, and the Abilene Ministerial Assoc., however Sr. Michael Ann is also proud of some her library-produced shows "They Lunch Alone" and "Summer in Abilene."

Memphis, Tenn.: ANN H. RICKEY cites "Beale Street" (a tape on local Black history) and "Mr. Boogie Woogie" (about a Memphis blues pianist) as the biggest favorites with cable and closed-circuit audiences in town over the past year. Along with Ann, principal producers with Real to Reel Productions are WALTER BALDWIN, ALEXIS KRASILOWSKY, RICHARD BLOES, and ELAINE DUNN. Newly completed Rickey-Baldwin production "Three Memphis Neighborhoods", done under contract with the Housing and Community Development Dept. of the city, has yet to be shown, but Ann feels it's one of the group's best efforts to date.

East Lansing, Mich.: When it comes to audience response to cable access programming, WELM-TV (Public Access Cable 11) has all the answers. Their newly completed survey of viewers' homes gives all the statistics on interest in the public access, school, library, and city programming. "MSU Hockey" series was singled out as access channel viewers' favorite pro-

gram (nearly 10% of all subscribers tune in weekly).

RANDY VAN DALSEN, Public Access Coordinator, also singled out this series as an achievement because of its high-quality production (5 cameras, 2 video replay angles, and 14-person crew). Other series in order of popularity: "Tee Vee Trivia" (7% of subscribers), "WELM News" (7%), "Impressions" by the Lansing Catholic Diocese (leads in popularity with viewers over 35 years old), "Tempo" by MIKE DOYLE and BILL DAVIS on movies and TV (4%), and "Black Notes" by the Black Notes Media Workshop (4% and the longest running access program).—

In all, about 75% of subscribers (12,200 viewers) are aware of WELM's public access programs and 53% actively watch the channel. Awareness and viewing of other access channels is slightly lower, but significant nonetheless for access.

Vineland, N.J.: HAZEL MORGAN is the Program Director of CUMBERLAND VISION, INC., serving Vineland on TPT Channel 2 and Millville on Harron CATV Channel 4. Volunteer MICKEY BRANDT says that the most popular programs are local sports, telethons, and town parades, and that Cumberland Vision coordinates and produces all local programming.

Minneapolis: Cable is coming soon to the Twin Cities, but in the meantime producers at UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY VIDEO show tapes closed circuit, via broadcast, through rentals/sales, special exhibitions, and on cable systems outside Mpls. Some of the most active producers are the Center for Internationalizing the Study of English (CIE), MIKE REVARD, JIM GAMBONE, Sheltered Workers' Coalition, and the UCV staff which shares its expertise with many local groups.

1981-83 Sites Under Consideration East Lansing Chosen for 1980 NFLCP Convention

East Lansing, Michigan was chosen as the site of the 1980 NFLCP Third Annual Convention, tentatively set for June 25-29. Announcement was made at the Federation Board of Directors meeting in Madison, Wisconsin, September 24.

The availability of adequate facilities and the overwhelming amount of support from numerous local agencies and groups was cited by the Board as the deciding factors. Bids were received from several cities.

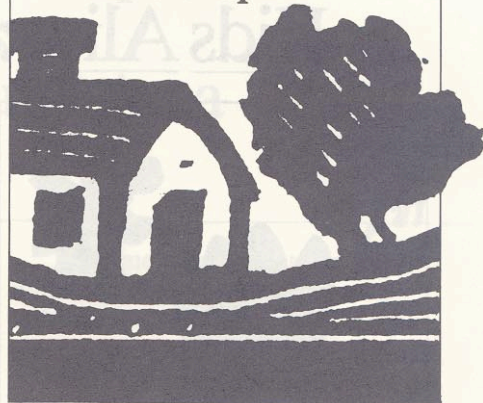
Randy Van Dalsen, coordinator of public access for National Cable Company will direct the convention organizing and has received generous offers of help from the City of East Lansing, the local cable commission and others.

Extensive information on plans for the event will come with the March issue of CTR.

The NFLCP Board is currently soliciting proposals for convention sites for 1981, 1982 and 1983. Recommended qualifications are that the city have an active community media center and that there be additional support from a university, college or city government.

Applicants should be able to provide some additional financial and/or staff support, low cost accommodations, accessible transportation and adequate meeting rooms. Send all proposals to Don Smith, Chairman, NFLCP, 4212 Morningside Drive, Bloomington, IN 47401.

Annual George Stoney Award Given to Rural Cable Co-op



Trempealeau County Wisconsin, was presented with the Annual NFLCP George Stoney Award for Humanistic Communications September 25, at the Educational Uses of Cable TV Conference held in Madison.

Rod Moen, Director of the Western Wisconsin Communications Cooperative (WWCC), accepted the award on behalf of America's first community-owned and operated county-wide cable TV system (see feature article, CTR Fall, 79).

Located in Trempealeau County, a farming area of only 25,000 scattered people in Western Wisconsin, the system will provide regular cable service and will connect eight school systems and their communities in the county by two-way audio and visual communication. This makes it possible for the schools to share classes via cable and enables county residents to tune in to the classes and cable cast their own program from their living rooms.

The project to establish this system was started in 1973 when the bus-ing of students from different schools to share classes and teachers became increasingly expensive. It was then that Moen, a retired Navy telecommunications specialist, was asked to look into the possibility of interconnecting the schools by a cable system.

By Fall 1978, the construction of the cable system began after certain requirements were met. In order to get a loan from the Farmers Home Administration, Moen had to obtain 40 per cent of its needed subscribers or 1,100 homes. This was accomplished with the help of many "dedicated" volunteers including the project's attorney and engineer as well as the local press.

Access America Project Widely Received

Messages to President Carter from California to New York have been pouring into the Access America Headquarters in Eau Claire, Wisconsin since mid-September as part of an NFLCP project to let the people speak.

Jan George, Access America Coordinator, reports an excellent response. "Almost every national issue of importance has been covered by someone somewhere in the country. Energy and the economy are the major topics, but the environment, foreign policy and women's issues are close seconds.

"Some people propose solutions, others question, and a few make de-

mands, and all are glad to have the opportunity to express themselves to the President," George added.

The video tapes will be edited to ninety minutes with excerpts from as many access center tapes as possible. A White House press secretary is presently determining if arrangements can be made to have President Carter respond to the issues as part of the ninety-minute program. This video tape will then be shown over national television.

As yet, a date for this showing has not been set. In addition, all of the tapes will be mailed to the President in their original form.

Anyone interested in further information about the Access America Project can contact: Jan George, Access America Headquarters, 400 Eau Claire Street, Eau Claire, Wisconsin 54701, or call (715) 839-5067.

Bond Tells Regulators of Cross-Ownership Effects

Atlanta City Councilmember and NFLCP Board member James Bond appeared as a witness in Hartford, Conn. before the state public utility agency to testify on the "abuses and ill-effects of media monopoly".

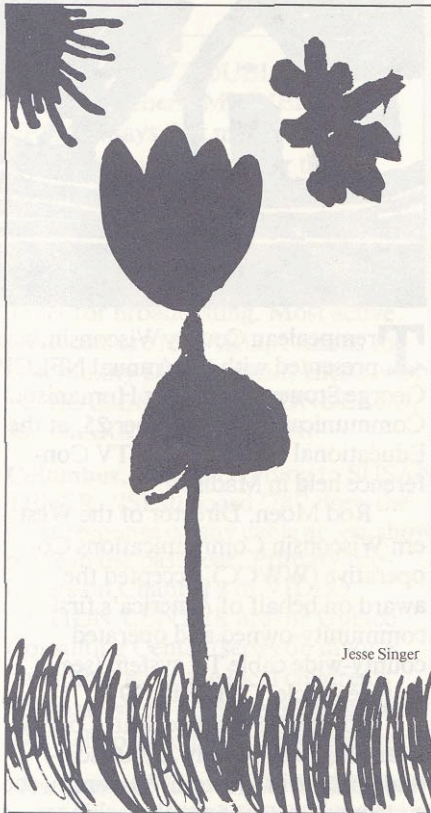
The hearing was conducted because Time-Mirror, a large media company that owns newspapers, newsweeklies, broadcast stations, and cable companies, recently purchased the only

daily newspaper in Hartford, where it already owns the cable system.

"I am going to tell the truth about how the Cox concentration of ownership in Atlanta has harmed the city, cable subscribers, and all citizens including me personally," Bond said. "I am being called as a witness for those opposing further concentration of ownership."

TV By Kids, For Kids

Bloomington's Popular Kids Alive:



A New Kind of Children's Television

by Don R. Smith and Rebecca McKelvey
Monroe County Public Library

Every other Thursday after school, Channel Three (Bloomington, Ind.) is invaded by children who come to make television. They arrive in twos and threes, some to run camera, some to direct, some to do interviews and skits or to perform.

It's "Kid's Alive" time and for two hours, seeming chaos reigns as novice camera-persons tilt, pan, and zoom through a series of conversations with local sports figures, educators and artists, through parodies of commercials and critical reviews of books, movies, and restaurants.

The kids do it all. They plan the program the week before, contacting guests, arranging interviews, writing scripts, building props, drawing graphics. Then they put them all together in a one half-hour live program, which occasionally runs 25 minutes, sometimes 33.

"Kid's Alive" is the center of our involvement with children's programming at Channel Three. It was begun in 1975 by Carol Batty, the children's librarian at the Monroe County Public Library, and has continued since under the guidance of Ginny Richie and Dana Burton. Dana is mainly responsible for coordinating the program now. She schedules workshops, arranges field trips, conducts planning sessions, and shepherds the kids through the productions.

"Kid's Alive" is open to any child ages 8-15, from Bloomington and Monroe County. Kids become involved through a series of workshops. Most start with the basic camera workshop. From there they work up through the ranks and learn to operate our portable SEG, to conduct interviews, and to host the programs.

Some kids are more interested in performing than in the technical aspects of production; others go on to take our field production workshop, which we give each summer, and become proficient in doing programs away from the studio. Each summer, for instance, we spend a week with a crew of children covering the Monroe County Fair. There they learn how to approach people and ask for interviews and how to cope with all the problems of shooting on location.

Once a year we take 10 to 12 kids on a field trip to another part of the state. They learn to structure a program in the field and usually come up with mini-documentaries on the places we visit. Two segments from one of these programs, "A Tour of the Mun-

cie Children's Museum," won first prize in a state-sponsored media fair. Some kids are already planning for future entries.

At present we use a Sony SLO 340 portable recorder with a Panasonic 3300 camera for our field productions and have a three-camera production unit for productions in the library auditorium. The kids rarely damage the equipment. They are well trained and extremely conscientious.

Several kids, who have been involved with Channel Three for over four years, have grown up with us and have begun to produce their own programs. It is exciting to watch them develop a technical sophistication and an awareness of the uses of television.

Children are involved in other aspects of Channel Three's programming as well. We have trained over 40 teachers in the local school system in the use of our portable equipment and they tape a number of musical productions, dramatic performances, and class projects. These tapes go into our library and parents and children call to request that they be shown on the channel. This past summer, 16 percent of the programs requested were made in the schools. When school is not in session our request programming is dominated by children who have learned to use that service.

Teachers also use Channel Three as a source of programming for their classes. They request local history programs or have class projects replayed, and we are expanding our collection of films and informational videotapes that can be shown to classrooms via our channel.

As more programming becomes available we would like to expand our capability and possibly devote a separate channel to children. We are also working on a series of programs for pre-schoolers with an emphasis on the local community that we expect will be used in day-care facilities.

Our children's programming is one of the most important things we do at Channel Three, and it has helped us develop broad community support for our access efforts. We have found that children love to explore and use the medium that dominates their lives, that they are good at making television, and that they are a joy to work with.

AccessProfile

Advanced Québec Cable System Addresses Communication Needs of a Multi-Cultural Area

Imagine! Only six to eight hours by car or one hour by plane from New York, Boston or Toronto, some of the major North American urban centers of the world, one finds a beautiful city in which the activity flows to the music, colors, tastes and smells of the entire world, orchestrated to the beautiful French language!

Voilà Montréal!

It is, for me, in this cosmopolitan center that one finds a microcosm of the broad base of communicational questions the world faces such as:

- Cultural integrity for all cultures vs. imperialism from any source;
- Cross-cultural communication, understanding and respect;
- The value of the process of two-way communication and the resulting personal change vs. traditional product-oriented, commercial viewpoint;
- The rights of the individual/groups to access information and the tools of the media.

I'd like to present to you one such experience in which I'm involved, with an organization which is confronting these and many other issues.

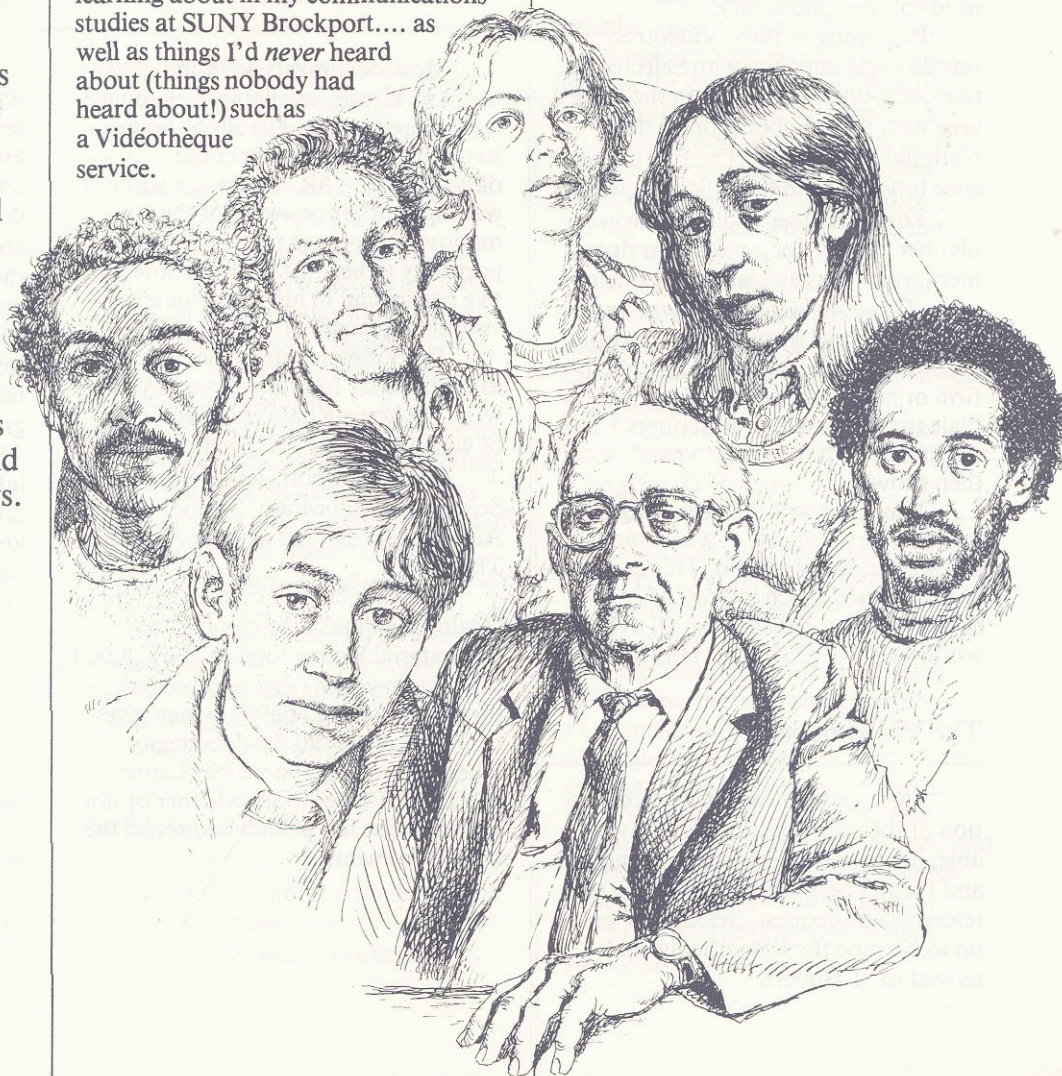
Télécable Vidéotron

Tucked away on the South Shore of Montréal in a small urban center called St-Hubert, one can find the headquarters of a rather not-so-modest cable TV company called Télécable Vidéotron, Ltée.

Actually, Télécable Vidéotron was one of the many considerations on my decision to relocate myself and my daughter in Québec. This company was actually *doing* something about all the theories and technology that I'd been learning about in my communications studies at SUNY Brockport.... as well as things I'd *never* heard about (things nobody had heard about!) such as a Vidéothèque service.

But, more about that in a few minutes... first I'd like to tell you a little about the history and the overall operation of Télécable Vidéotron, Ltée.

Télécable Vidéotron, Ltée. is a privately-owned cable TV company with headquarters in St-Hubert, Québec and branches in Lévis, Buckingham, Gatineau, St-Jean, St-Jérôme, and Mont-Laurier. Of a total of 541 cable TV networks in Canada, Vidéotron quite proudly is listed among the top ten (10) most important operations, with a total number of subscribers around 325,000.



by Susan Castle

AccessProfile

It has earned a reputation for being the most innovative cable TV company in the world. Some of the very best feedback obtained comes from the subscriber via his/her vote of confidence in the form of 56.6% saturation of our territories.

Inter-active Television

St-Hubert is only one hour's worth of flat terrain to the American border and 20 - 30 minutes (depending on the traffic) from Montréal. All of which means that with an adequate outside antennae, a family really doesn't need to subscribe to cable TV in order to get mostly-adequate reception on four American and the five Canadian commercial channels.

As you can see, Télécable Vidéo-tron had to come up with something special to introduce the concept of cable television to the people of the community! So, they started at the logical place ... the communicational needs of the community.

Beginning in 1969, Vidéo-tron started experimenting with Sélecto-TV, television-on-request, within the Beloeil area with the collaboration of the National Film Board. The first experience functioned in the following way:

The subscriber could phone in his/her "vote" for a particular document which was available on ¾" cassette. This vote was then shown on a specific channel opening the opportunity for other subscribers to call and affirm or negate this vote. (A form of dialogue between the subscribers.) The document with the most "votes" was then shown.

This, then was the beginning of an inter-active television — a new model of video communication. This experience attracted much interest of communication specialists from all over the world (as have all of their innovations).

The Vidéothèque

Then, in 1973, with the augmentation of the number of channels available, it now became possible to enlarge and further personalize the service of television-on-request. Sélecto-TV grew up to become the Vidéothèque and moved to St-Hubert.



Photos by Daniel Thomas

"Diffuseur" René Tremblay takes calls and programs six request channels from a library of over 5,000 video documents.

More documents were added to the bank already available, a catalogue was created and sent to all the homes, so that now a subscriber could directly request his/her choice without waiting for the consensus of the community. The person now had the opportunity to become an even more active participant in his/her own television programming!

The Vidéothèque at the present is assigned to six full-time (seven days a week, 24 hours a day) channels, each of which is assigned a specific theme:

Children, Sports and Leisure, Science and Education, Socio-cultural Activities, Social Affairs and Arts and Theatre.

A subscriber can consult his/her catalogue to make the choice of viewing material from a total of about 5,000 cassettes in which (s)he is interested, then check on channel 28 (which gives the run-down of all the documents scheduled to play, on which channel and at what time) to see whether or not someone else has already requested the same document.

If not already scheduled, the subscriber then calls the "diffuseur" (the person who works in the Vidéothèque answering the clients' phone requests and actually playing the requested documents), who checks the availability of the requested document and the next free time period for the appropriate channel with the computer and then schedules this request (often immediately) advising the client of the time and channel for the chosen programming.

In order to "de-bug" some of the inherent problems, such as the repetition of favorite documents and to keep time open for as many different calls as possible, the following guidelines were established:

1. Requests for documents cannot be taken on a reservation basis — only on an availability of channel-time basis for a 24-hour period.
2. During the day, a document can only be shown once (from 8 am-5 pm)
3. A document can only be shown once a week in "prime time" (5 pm-midnight)
4. From midnight to 8 am, none of these apply.

AccessProfile



Daniel Thomas, left, and Camille Lord, switch cameras from the mobile unit which travels through the community, producing local programming.

5. A few favorite children's programs have been pre-scheduled to keep as many calls and documents circulating as possible.

During the summer period and school vacations, easily 95 percent of all requests are from children. During school hours, this ratio changes to about 75 percent adult request and the requests also slow down. In general, Vidéotron's future subscribers (these young people) catch on so much faster and are so much less intimidated than we adults by these "new" tools of communication!

Community Channels

In 1973, in St-Jérôme, Vidéotron constructed the first-in-the-world completely bi-directional network with a capacity of 35 channels. Thus, from this moment, it became possible to communicate directly from the subscribers' home to all the other "cabled" homes in the network.

All the community activities could now be shown completely rather than just having the results announced as a brief news bulletin. All the citizens are given free access to the production equipment. The members of the com-

munity could now decide what and how to present the events / activities which best represent their interest and needs!

During the construction of the network for the South Shore of Montréal, special consideration was given to the subject of access for the individual communities which make up the "South Shore" region such as Longueuil, Beloeil and Brossard, Candiac and Laprairie.

An exclusive channel was assigned each to Longueuil-St-Hubert, another for Beloeil, and yet another for Brossard, Laprairie and Candiac, instead of grouping them all together and imposing an exterior "community" structure.

Thus, each community was accorded respect for the very reasons it had become a community in the first place, and given access to these tools of television communication.

AND MORE....

The total picture, aside from the commercial channels, is ALL community service / interest-oriented:

24 hour-a-day, 7 day-a-week channels for each of the following:

- Weather
- Consumer Information
- Employment Service
- TV Program Guide for other than TCV-originated programming
- Want Ads
- News
- TV Program Guide for TCV-originated programs
- TV Guide for Vidéothèque documents
- Self-Testing Encyclopedia Channel
- House of Commons from Ottawa
- L'Assemblée Nationale du Québec
- A Course Channel for courses

as diverse as ballet-jazz, pottery, women's studies, painting and drawing, botany and horticulture, and medicine (health) ... recorded right here in our studio

- Video Games such as hangman, othello, chess, master mind, checkers and backgammon which are played against the computer which is activated by the touch-tone telephone.

The newest programming service is 100 hours a week of direct-from-France programs which are being "imported" by a consortium of Québec cable TV operators.

Each subscriber, from the moment of installation, receives automatically and for no extra charges, the converter, which sells in the stores for around \$120.

The (Near) Future

Télécanal Vidéotron hasn't stopped there! It's looking forward to an interconnection by microwave of its territories, is actively involved in research with the Minister of Communications of Canada, l'école Polytechnique, l'Université de Montréal and the Montréal newspaper "La Presse" concerning an alpha-numeric, computerized TV newspaper (Vidéotex) and is seriously considering all the aspects and questions of world-wide importance concerning distribution by satellite.

There is really no end in sight to this story.....

Interaction

Overcoming Passive Program Format Is Emphasis of Vermont Group

by Tom Borup
CTR Managing Editor

The state coordinator of the Gray Panthers was comfortably seated in the studio with the local social service worker and a state university sociologist. The topic was problems of aging in a rural state. It's another of your typical Humanities Council discussions, except that the St. Johnsbury Television Cooperative had struggled for some time trying to make the series interesting and watchable.

It was evident that there was still progress to be made, but the mixed format program was carried off with obvious skill and a fluency with the language of television.

A personal, well-produced tape explored the social conditions of some familiar folks and was followed by the usual studio rap. And then the phone began to ring.

The most touching and what I consider the most important moment of the hour and a half came when a caller asked to speak with Faire Edwards, the Gray Panther leader.

"Faire? It's Beatrice," she said.

Faire's face lighted up and she looked into the camera.

"Hi Bea!" she boomed. "I'm so glad you called."

Changing the Tube

Responsive, live programming which stresses participation and interaction is a disappointingly underutilized form which deserves more attention and experimentation by community programmers. In this article, I'd like to discuss some of the important values of live, participatory television, some of the problems accompanying it, and the experiences the St. Johnsbury, Vermont group had trying to make responsive TV.

It would be interesting if community programmers saw their work as re-inventing television — tossing out as much previous experience and preconception about its form as possible, in an effort to evolve a style appropriate and unique to their community. This is admittedly not the easiest thing to do when your audience and community supporters think you're crazy and demand what they're more accustomed to.

An overriding factor, however, in working to change the message of television, I feel, is the relationship the viewer has to the institution of the glowing box.

Community Participation

The early programming efforts in St. Johnsbury were focused on a participatory approach. The existing community programming group was begun by half a dozen Goddard College Community Media students who went into the Northern Vermont "city" (population 9,000) in June, 1977. Working with a corresponding number of teenagers from the local youth center, community issues were identified, on-the-street interviews were made an integral part of programming, and a variety of guests were lined up to discuss everything from teenage pregnancy to tax reform.

The live format programs incorporated all the standard demystification techniques: introducing behind the scenes people, operating tape playback on camera, having tape producers explain in person their motivation, difficulties and what they learned from their experience. It was especially important to have the producer available to the audience for criticism, com-

pliments and conversation with viewers over the ever-present telephone.

As many people as possible were involved in the production and cablecasting. Volunteers from the senior center worked studio cameras, kids who were recruited in the park came to hang out in the studio and lend a hand.

The phone would ring incessantly and single programs often ran between two and three hours until either the callers or the crew were exhausted. Often it was the latter.

Efforts were begun to train as many community people as possible in production techniques. Relationships with educational institutions, the Chamber of Commerce, community groups and social action agencies were initiated; training workshops were set up. Even an on-the-street short course in porta-pak operation was conducted a couple times for passersby.

Everything was geared toward finding new and better ways to involve people. In fact, viewing, in the traditional sense, became subordinate to involvement. Somewhat idealistically it was thought that everyone could be a participant.

Narrowcasting

When combined with an understanding of narrowcasting, live, community access television can be turned into a medium which can constantly foster community dialogue and interaction. Freeing oneself of the "broad-casting" approach — the search for the lowest common denominator so as to appeal to the broadest possible audience — is not easy. But, it's important when trying to effectively utilize the so-called channel abundance of cable.

Narrowcasting, or producing programming intended for a specific group or type of person, can make the medi-

um more personal and effective. Print publishers have understood this for some time and print has been used extensively in all sorts of commercial and community organizing efforts.

The viewer/producers know more precisely who they're communicating with and are thus more open. Viewers tend to excuse some technical quality and production values. The portable video recorder is then more easily put into the hands of members of the target constituency and becomes a more valuable tool for them to use to explore their environment and share it with others.

Community Reaction

If the Television Cooperative was going to gain credibility, acceptance and ultimately community involvement in its governance and support, they found they had to temper their funky loose quality, spontaneous appearance, sometimes provocative selection of topics — in a word, their creativity.

This necessitated more use of tape and slicker production values which, in turn, limited access and direct involvement by anyone who couldn't devote the time to become a semi-professional. Control and production shifted heavily onto the staff which was held strictly accountable.

Politically insecure funding sources couldn't risk association with anything controversial or for things that "just anybody" on the street or telephone might say. Live programming was forbidden and discouraged by these funding sources.

It was unfortunate that the St. Johnsbury group was unable to turn over control and responsibility for programming to the established community while maintaining a participatory format.

I haven't meant to belittle the importance of community control next to a participatory programming form. My intention has been to point out the contradiction which often confronts community programmers and to emphasize the importance of struggling with it.

Effective Facilitation

St. Johnsbury has felt a more rapid and acute evolution than most community access television endeavors, but I think shares similar problems.

As George Stoney stressed in his keynote at the 1978 NFLCP Conven-

tion: in order for access to be meaningful and ultimately survive, community programmers must remember that their primary role is as facilitators of access. Their objective should not be to gain access for themselves and then become a professional producer. The access person should be, what Sharon Goldenberg, of the St. Johnsbury TV Co-op calls "an invisible community organizer," not a tape producer, nor a TV star.

Forces in the community, the nature of the technology and traditional responses to television by both audiences and access facilitators tend to move us into this undesirable role. Convincing the community of the need to alter the form has become the major challenge.

Live Television

Live, participatory community programming is neither the cause nor the cure for this contradiction which plagues access efforts. It is, however, a form of television which allows the passive viewer role to be effectively attacked. When coupled with the telephone, a live format allows television to become a tool for true dialogue. When complemented by portable video recorders, which can move through the community, it can become stimulating, engaging television involving many people.

If progress is to be made in altering the relationship of the viewer to television, and ultimately to change television at all, the TV can never be left a one-way device transmitting unanswerable information or commentary — regardless of content.

Viewers must be able to call up and be heard equally. They must know where to go and how to cablecast their reply, and they must know to whom to complain or for whom to vote to have a real effect on what they're viewing.

The St. Johnsbury group has successfully begun to accustom their audience to calling up and being heard without hesitation, engaging in public dialogue on TV.

In response to a discussion initiated by a phone call on the aging program cited in the opening, Faure Edwards said, "Wouldn't it be great if we got 20 or so older folks to march around the hall during town meeting to demand clear, safe sidewalks? They'd have to pay attention to us then."

The phone rang instantly.

"I'll be there in my wheelchair!" the caller exclaimed.

The St. Johnsbury Television Co-operative
Presents a Discussion of Public Issue:

SCHOOLS AND OUR COMMUNITY

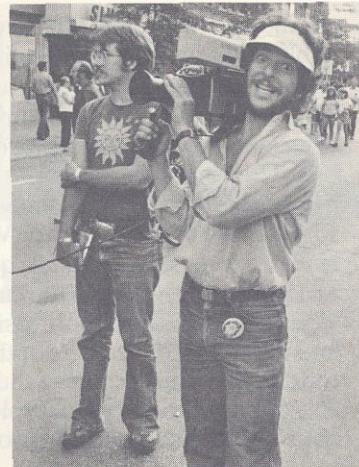
What is the Future of Family Farming in the Northeast Kingdom?

The St. Johnsbury Television Co-operative Presents
a Discussion of Public Issue:

The Problems of Aging in the Northeast Kingdom

The St. Johnsbury Television Co-operative
Presents a Discussion of Public Issue:

The Responsiveness of Town Government



The "Barre Ethnic Festival" Provides Training

by Ann McIntosh
Community Media, Goddard College

It is always difficult to teach while under pressure to produce a professional piece using students as crew. It is equally problematic to "teach" community media, when the students are not indigenous to the community in which they're learning.

The documentary of the two-day Barre Vermont Ethnic Heritage Festival in July 1979, was a product of two programs: the Summer Community Media Program at Goddard College and my National Endowment for the Arts Artist-in-Residency. Both stipulated working with students and local participants on a documentary.

In addition, I invited artists to work with us: Richard Leacock, cinema-verité pioneer and Nancy Cain and Bart Friedman from Media Bus. Whether despite or, ironically, by virtue of all the above, we produced a documentary that was artistically sound, community responsive, and a valid teaching experience.

Sponsored by the Barre Ethnic Heritage Association, the Festival is an entertaining, widespread community effort. Participation by over 14 ethnic groups consisted of converting store windows into ethnic tableaux, setting up displays, closing off the main business district where dozens of concessions and outdoor restaurants were operated for two days, and organizing floats and bands for the parade.

One of my primary concerns was to promote the idea of community media in Barre, a city of 10,000 with over 90 per cent cable penetration and no local programming.

I have always thought that an effective way to make the value of local programming immediately visible is to produce a tape of a major event in which many people participate. Everyone will know when and where to see themselves and friends on TV, and if you're in a position to continue local programming, you'll have gotten to know some handy allies and budding producers.

By early June, when students arrived at Goddard, the Festival Committee was eagerly anticipating the videotape. Almost as soon as video workshops began, students were enthusiastic about the project and anxious to dive in.

After impressing on them the need for deference and caution in an unfamiliar community, I assigned traditional production roles. Hierarchical as they may seem, they were a help in getting comparative strangers to work cooperatively.

The outreach people then began attending Association meetings, working with committee chairpeople. An office was set up complete with an enormous map of the City of Barre, which got more and more illegible as the assignment editor staked out location and time of happenings.

One of the students with prior advertising experience, Steve Schuster, decided to supplement the limited tape budget by selling local sponsorships. In order to firm up Steve's package and confirm that we could indeed run our program over Barre cable, Schuster, myself and Nancy Jesuale, the Associate Producer, set up a meeting with Nicholas Sanguinetti, owner/operator of Vermont Television Corporation.

Like many operators who have never experienced the benefits of local programming, Sanguinetti was receptive, but unwilling to give any financial support. We all agreed that 6 to 6:30 p.m. was cable prime time and we decided to make three half-hour segments and repeat the sequence twice.

Throughout the month of June, students deepened their personal connections with association members and began to single out individuals for 'portraits' — cameo tapes that I hoped would add depth to the story line. Only one portrait materialized and in the future I would stress this stage of taping. In addition to their use in the final tape the portraits give new video-makers a concrete opportunity to complete their own mini-tape.

A few students used their time with members of the Association to try to discover what "ethnicity" means to people in Barre. In the early part of the century Barre was a center of socialist and anarchist labor activity because of the working conditions in the granite quarries and the large number of politicized Italian immigrant stone cutters.

Today, however, few people want to talk about former times when ethnic differences added fuel to antagonisms. The prevailing attitude now is of the friendly melting pot, when people are proud of their roots and seldom mention past prejudices.

As outsiders, we saw our job as letting the prevailing attitudes come through, letting the community speak for itself on the tape.



Ground for Community Television Students

Within the Community Media Program, we had talked a great deal about the kind of shooting style we wanted to develop. I had stressed the importance of openness on the part of the crew, friendly cameras that don't hide camerapeople; sound people and interviewers who have conversations, not assinine interviews; smooth, hand-held camerawork that encourages the lens to sense shape and form, shots that reflect a sense of purpose.

Independent film, photography and video have usually made these demands on themselves. However, as community television producers we have often simply changed the nature of our content and our target audience without changing the form, style and techniques. What this means is that we haven't yet made a commitment to shoot with a personal eye, with a trust in the individual's way of seeing. We still rely on stiff conventions.

The visiting artists had been selected for having developed alternative styles: Media Bus for their charming aggressiveness, playful style; Leacock for cinema-verité, letting things happen rather than instigating or interviewing.

To prepare the students for the guests, I had screened much of their work in class and a joint screening was held the night before the first day's shooting.

Of course, all the students wanted to work with all the visitors, but not all of them had equal artistic and technical skills, nor had all been equally involved with the project. Furthermore, I, as teacher, wanted all students to have equal time with the "pros"; but I as the producer-director, wanted the very best tape possible.

The task of making taping shifts and crew assignments, therefore, was not easy. There were 12 students, six of whom had been extensively involved in planning, the other hitherto involved in other projects; there were three local artists, Nancy, myself and Cindy Marshall, another woman working in the Goddard program. Then there were the visiting artists.

We used a zoning system, coupled with the flexibility to make individual choices. Little duplication occurred and what was most important to our visitors was the freedom we gave them to make their own choices. There was no *deus ex machina* TV director dictating what to get. There were artists and students free to find and develop their own images.

We set up a playback station in the lounge of a restaurant. Since our headquarters was upstairs, video crews as well as members of the public were able to relax and watch tapes right off the street. This enabled people to see what had already been covered as well as a space to suggest new approaches.

Three weeks before the Barre event, we taped the Plainfield, Vermont Fourth of July celebration as practice. George Stoney, longtime leader in the community media movement, was visiting for the occasion and, mostly due to George's influence, that shoot took on an importance of its own.

By having the students do the same jobs they would in Barre, we worked out a number of kinks in our logistics. By the time we got to Barre, people were secure enough within the structure to break away from it when they saw a better alternative.

One of the strongest lessons we learned was the wastefulness of fixed camera positions. Steve Schuster had gotten very into riding on a fire engine in the Plainfield parade and elected to shoot from a jeep in Barre. I rode with him and it was lots of fun, but we agreed that you have nowhere near the mobility you get moving about on foot.

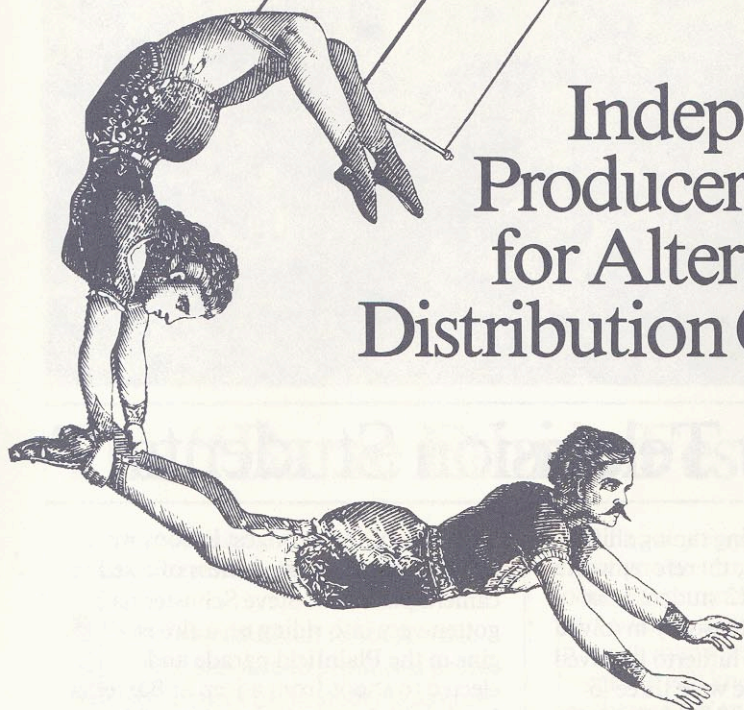
Nancy Jesuale and I continually stressed that the entire group must have a good time, the shooting must reflect a sense of fun (or seriousness, when appropriate). This attitude gave us more personal, community media rather than rigid, conventional television.

Cindy Marshall undertook to edit the tape, assisted by Schuster, James Yaggi and myself. We produced three half-hour segments, each one having a structure of its own, and a 90-minute version giving a more or less chronological overview.

Taking her cue from one of George Stoney's suggestions, Cindy played back some selections to a post-Festival committee meeting, and based some of her editorial decisions on their responses.

The Barre community responded to the program with the enthusiasm that usually results from showing people themselves and their friends on TV. Whether the endeavor will help to initiate more local programming in Barre, we can't yet say.

Independent Producers Reach for Alternative Distribution Outlets



by Margie Nicholson
NFLCP Midwest Coordinator

At the July NFLCP Convention in Austin, Texas, several workshops focused on access to broadcast television, satellites, and other distribution alternatives for community and independent producers.

Participants agreed that running videotapes on a cable access channel isn't the only way to reach an audience. In at least two communities, Minneapolis and New Orleans, production facilities were developed years ago in anticipation of cable television.

Students at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis started University Community Video (UCV) in 1973 in anticipation of cable development. Although they're still awaiting cable, UCV ran a half-hour monthly program, "Changing Channels," for four years on their local public television station, KTCA.

Last year UCV trained over 1,000 people in video production and a core staff of UCV producers regularly produced programs for closed circuit showings to special interest groups.

"It takes a lot of energy to reach that narrow audience," says Sallie Fischer, UCV General Manager, "but UCV's closed circuit showings have been very successful."

In addition to "narrowcasting," UCV acts as a broker for independent producers by promoting and selling their videotapes to public and commercial television stations.

New Orleans Video Access Center (NOVAC) has been in operation since 1971 and, according to Andrew Kolker, "focuses on dealing with the problems of low income people."

They cooperate with public and commercial stations in airing some tapes and, in an attempt to better reach their audience, they're also setting up viewing areas in waiting rooms of welfare agencies and general assistance offices.

Another example of successful tape distribution without cable access is taking place in the Northwest. The Northwest Media Project established a cooperative distribution system for films in 1974. According to coop member, Melissa Marsland, volunteer speakers drive the films/tapes around for showing and discussion with community groups. Two area television stations also screen works and often rent them for broadcast.

Several participants at the recent convention discussed their experiences with distributing tapes to broadcast television—both public and commercial. They agreed that the potential for reaching a wider audience was tremendous but cautioned that dealing with broadcasters often meant too many compromises in program content and control.

Harriet Moss helped coordinate satellite and public television distribution of the recent nuclear March on Washington, D.C. Moss noted that Chuck Allen, Program Director at KCET in Los Angeles was very supportive and feels that, overall, independents "are in a very good spot now with PBS stations."

"The stations are on the hot seat to run programs by independents but wary — you must build trust," she said.

Moss advised independents to approach PBS stations with good quality programs for relatively low prices, i.e. \$100-150 per hour. While PBS purchase budgets are limited, they will be tempted if the price is right.

The entire march on Washington, she said, was produced with a 1610 camera and a 3800 deck and there was no problem with technical quality or standards. The challenge is in building a working relationship with the public stations, according to Moss.

Elton Soltes, an independent producer from Los Angeles was less encouraging about the prospects of independent programming on public television. "PBS is thinking of picking up 'Paper Chase,'" he says, "and they consider it an independent production."

Soltes fears that the rumored \$20 million that's coming down the PBS pipeline for independent productions will go toward purchase of "Paper Chase," Norman Lear Productions, and other commercially popular Hollywood programming.

Soltes suggests that even though commercial broadcasters seem to be becoming more accountable, the networks are interested in producing their own programs.

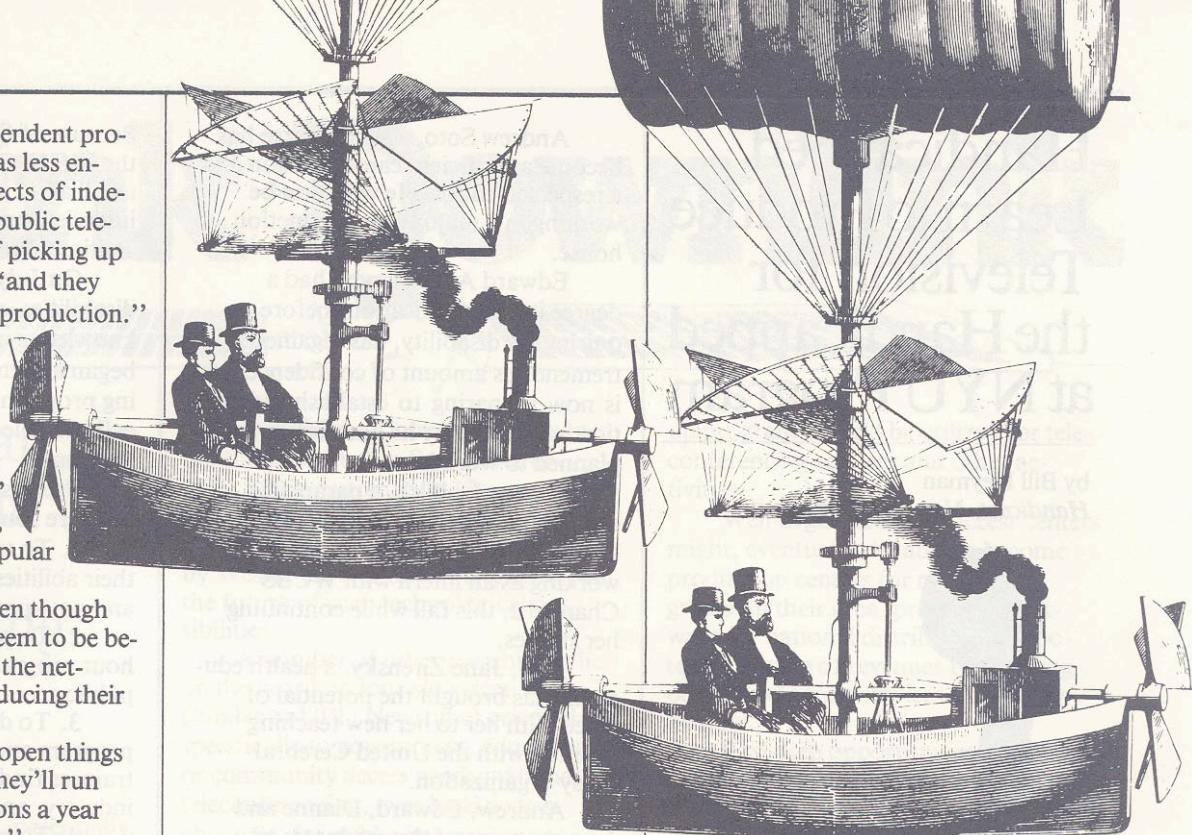
"Pamela Hill tried to open things up a bit at ABC — where they'll run four independent productions a year but overall progress is slow."

In another discussion on program distribution via public television, Brian Owens advised that it's usually easier for independents to approach regional public television groups than their local PBS stations.

The Southern Educational Communications Association (SECA) recently held a meeting in New Orleans to look at the work of independent producers and standardize a license and acquisition formula. The 54 stations in SECA have \$19 million to spend on programming. "Showdown at the Hoedown," a Hometown U.S.A. winner in 1978, originally went to SECA for \$50,000. The producers then went to PBS and said, "if SECA will carry it, you should." They did.

Owens went on to describe his experiences in setting up videotape distribution via cable networks, libraries, museums, educational associations, and the home video market. He advised using the National Cable Television Association's directory of cable systems to identify systems that may be interested in running independent productions. A current directory is available from NCTA at 918 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.

Libraries are another potential outlet for programming. Seven libraries in Georgia have recently formed a network for video distribution and are looking for material. Kandy Brandt at Seattle Public Library has information about the national association of video librarians.



Producers who are making tapes which could be used in college for high school classes should contact the national association for each educational group by direct mail or by attending conventions. Entrepreneurs have sold tapes and films on subjects like "The Wyoming Cowboy," "Pennsylvania Politics," and "Primary Elections and the Working Press," to Political Science and Journalism departments for \$300-\$1000 per program.

The home video consumer market is just opening up and shows potential for independent producers. Owens suggests that independents contact distributors who advertise in home video magazines. The distributors could handle promotion and distribution in exchange for a percentage of the profits.

Although there is much potential for program distribution via satellites, the expense at present is probably beyond the range of most independents and community producers. Participants in a panel on satellite distribution agreed that in spite of their efforts they haven't achieved much success as yet.

Independents may be able to purchase satellite time and line up a cable network to show their programs and recoup their costs by selling advertising. Commercial producers, like Ernie Sauer of Satori Productions, who have been having problems with tape bicycling, are now distributing via satellite and are picking up some national advertisers.

Satellite experts claim that it's cheaper and easier to purchase satellite time from brokers like Southern Satellite Systems rather than dealing directly with RCA. The brokers have already purchased all the time available anyway.

The Public Service Satellite Consortium pays approximately \$150 per hour to put their health education package on the Cable Satellite Network. At the other end of the scale, a national church group recently paid \$5,000 for 1½ hours of prime time on WTCG.

The total cost for the live public affairs satellite special on American Labor was \$20,000. That included \$7,000 for publicity and other charges for labor, satellite time, production, etc.

Speaking of publicity, the successful distributors advise that producers provide as much promotional material as possible with their programs. Thirty and sixty second promotional spots at the beginning of the tape, press releases, and even a brochure will help generate audiences.

Finally, independent producers who have been frustrated in all other attempts to distribute their programs may want to emulate the example of a group in Boulder, Colorado. When they didn't like the services of their local Public Television Station, they applied for their own UHF frequency. That may be the only sure, but expensive way, of distributing independent productions.

Handicapped Learn to Produce Television for the Handicapped at NYU Program

by Bill Heyman
Handicast, New York University

Andrew Soto, a leg amputee has become a proficient cameraperson and a respected editor. He will soon be working in a major post production house.

Edward Argenti, who had a degree in communications before acquiring his disability, has regained a tremendous amount of confidence, and is now preparing to establish his position in an industry he had earlier planned to work in.

Dianna Kobilca, a paraplegic enrolled at New York University's University Without Walls, will be working as an intern with WCBS Channel 2, this fall while continuing her studies.

And, Jane Zirensky, a health educator, has brought the potential of video with her to her new teaching position with the United Cerebral Palsy organization.

Andrew, Edward, Dianne and Jane are some of the graduates of Handicast, a New York University vocational training program in television production designed to meet the needs of people with disabilities.

While in my senior year at NYU, I learned that physically disabled people would not be admitted to study television communications in the School of the Arts. To strengthen this administrative position, the building housing the television department was inaccessible to the physically disabled.

Understanding NYU's situation and the needs of the disabled community, and their right to public access programming, I worked to develop and organize a training program with assistance from Jack Savage, Joe Halderman and Nathaniel Merri'l, to train physically disabled people in all aspects of production.

Knowing that the Journalism and Mass Communication Department's accessible color TV studio lay idle during the summer, Professor Stevens and Department Chairman William Burrows agreed to allow Handicast its use for the duration of the summer. These two gentlemen enabled Handicast to start its wheels in motion.

Enrolling people in the Handicast summer program was the next step. This was achieved with help from both NYU's Office of Disabled Student Services, under the direction of Marty Shulter and John O'Connor's *New York Times* announcement of the program.

Because of O'Connor's article, and the D.S.S. Office, Handicast was able to fill all 12 training positions after interviewing nearly 50 applicants. The Tuition? Free.

On July 2, 12 people with varying disabilities, most having little if any knowledge of the television medium, began an intensive two-month training program to prove that the physically disabled could work in TV production.

Promised to the Handicast trainees were four points:

1. To train each individual using their abilities in as many crew, pre-, and post-production positions;
2. To produce, while training, half hour programs to be programmed on public access cable;
3. To develop a job placement program and help the Handicast trainees find positions in the broadcast industry, and
4. To begin plans for replicating the Handicast idea in other areas of the United States.

Success is Handicast's story.

During the short summer months the program completed two magazine format programs, all the work being done by physically disabled people. These programs were complete with verbatim captioning for the deaf.

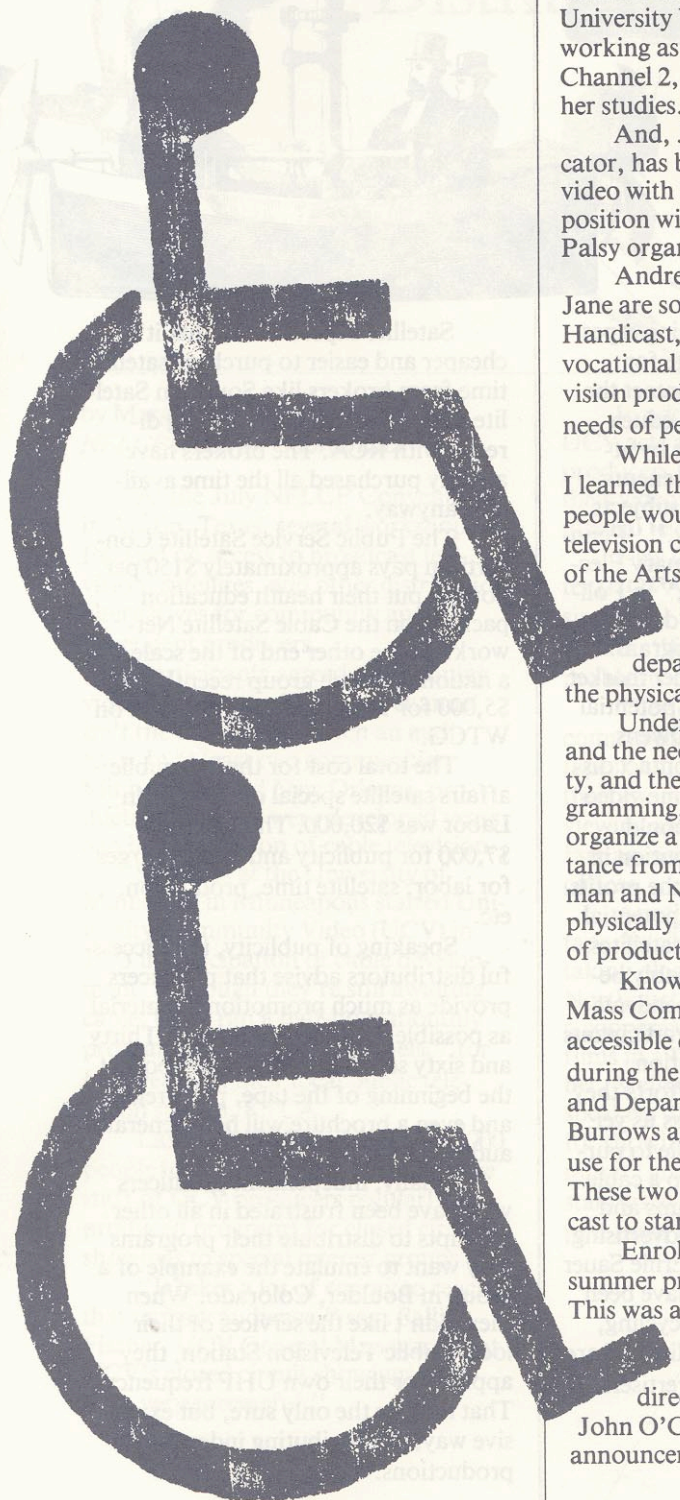
Our four promised points were accomplished.

Handicast developed and organized a "hands on" training program for the disabled, initiated a job placement service, produced quality programming, and has been generously offered the use of numerous cable studios in New Jersey to replicate the Handicast program, including weekly time slots.


Such a short article leaves many areas to be touched upon. But what Handicast accomplished this summer must be seen to be believed.

Programmers please take note. Handicast is now being sponsored by New York University. We are here to stay, and we are producing quality, informative and entertaining programs. This special interest programming, with your assistance, can be made available to the millions of disabled, their families and friends throughout the United States.

For more information, write: Handicast, c/o Disabled Student Services, 21 Washington Place, New York, NY 10003.



Uplink / Downlink



Satellites Can Offer Locals Enriched Programming Schedules

by William F. Rushton

Satellite technology is, potentially, the best thing ever to happen to the community access television movement.

Access channels are routinely underfinanced and underequipped—which is why satellite-fed “supplements” can enrich local programming and promotional efforts at little or no cost.

The enrichment can come in many forms:

- A satellite-delivered program on a particular issue, explored from a national perspective, could be used as the “trigger” for a local, live, follow-up discussion. With phone-in capability (combining a “call director” or multi-button phone, and a “phone patch” switch costing about \$50), the access channel could offer a unique service with high production values that local broadcast TV stations would be hard-pressed to equal.

- Satellite-delivered PSAs, art tapes, documentaries, and news “shorts” can be taped and saved for incorporation in later programs. Southern Satellite Systems’ Satellite Programming Network (Satcom transponder #21), Modern Talking Picture Service’s sponsored daytime program feed (over transponder #22) and the Appalachian Regional Commission’s Community Service Network (over transponder #16) are three sources of such supplementary programming services already operational.

- Satellites can also link local access channels for simultaneous live programming. New York-based access

producer Helene Zimmerman inaugurated this concept in September of 1978, when Automation House studios in New York were linked to the Theta Cable system in Southern California by Westar for a phone-in discussion on the future of such technological possibilities.

A number of other possibilities lie on the near horizon: slow-scan feeds (similar to UPI/Newstime) oriented specifically to government, educational or community access needs; national teleconferencing, over local access channels, for public interest groups or single-issue organizing efforts; and satellite-delivered data services.

All we lack at this point is a workable structure for organizing and delivering these new opportunities. In 1976, the Public Interest Satellite Association (PISA) queried the nonprofit sector on their communications needs, and those figures revealed at that time over \$20 million a year spent on media spots and meetings that could be “converted” to satellite networking—the money, in other words, is not the problem.

At the Center for Non-Broadcast Television (CNB-TV) at Automation House, we are busily developing prototype programs for a new, national nonprofit network. Our series of national programming experiments begins in December. This new service will start out as your basic color video feed, but in the future various sideband, subcarrier and vertical interval capabilities could be harnessed to provide some of these possible supplementary services.

For example, the Pacifica radio stations and other community-based radio (the audio counterparts to public access TV) could be given space on one of these satellite channels—a move which could help build better working relationships between local alternative audio and video efforts.

“Blank” segments on a national satellite feed, when local access channel “affiliates” are doing their follow-

up programs, could be utilized for teleconferencing services and other activities.

Well-organized local access centers might, eventually, be able to become production centers for nonprofit groups in their area, producing software for national distribution—a potential source of revenues for keeping other local access services financially healthy.

First-step opportunities begin December 9, with “Kicking The Habit: Energy in the 1980s” featuring William Winpisinger, President of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, and consumer advocate Ralph Nader. This live satellite special will air from noon to 1:30 pm Eastern time over HBO and Showtime transponders 10, 12, 22 and 24.

On January 27, Bess Myerson will moderate the “National Breast Cancer Teach-In” from noon to 2 pm over the same satellite hook-up. Both programs will feature live phone-in segments at the end, and both are offered free to cable systems with satellite receive terminals.

On January 13, and February 10, the Arthritis Foundation of New York will inaugurate its monthly program series with Henry Fonda—but details on these and other productions are not yet finalized.

Your access center can participate by making certain your local cable company carries the program (you can arrange a taped cassette for a later date if live participation is not possible). Contact your local IAM lodge or your local chapter of the American Cancer Society to do a pre-program publicity campaign and post-program follow-up.

And by all means, let us know all about what localized treatments, working arrangements and spin-offs you develop. For further information write CNB-TV, 49 E. 68th Street, New York City, 10021.

William F. Rushton is Director of Research at the Center for Non-Broadcast TV, New York.

Regional Reports



Northeast

Rochester to Host NFLCP; Northeast Members Busy

Portable Channel of Rochester hosted Northeast Regional Conference Nov. 16 & 17 at Visual Studies Workshop. "Promise and Reality: Cable in the 1980s" was the title. City of Rochester just awarded franchise to American Television and Communications.

Robin Weber, AIVF, and Jay April, City of Manchester, keynoted the first Connecticut Conference on Video, "Vidiconn," funded by the State Arts Commission, Oct. 18, at Connecticut Public Television. Co-ordinated by Tim Keating and MonteVideo, the event was joined by Alan McGlade, former Vermonter, now Community Video Center, San Diego; Paige Amidon, NYC; Michael Wex, NJ; Parry Teasdale, and Tom Borup. Dotti Shami showed "Coming Out of Violence," which has been in big demand.

Peter Brown, St. Johnsbury, has organized over a dozen Vermont educators and cable programmers to testify at legislative hearings to advocate creation of regulatory arm for cable and has planned a Dec. 8, state NFLCP meeting with Lt. Governor Madeline Kunin as guest speaker.

Phyllis Joffe, Vermont Association of Media Producers, and Northeast Rep., produced Seabrook documentary for KPFA-FM and sent dozens of feeds across the country for Seabrook and Wall St. anti-nuke actions.

Northeasterner and National Board Member, Jean Rice, has moved from Albany and the NY State Cable Commission to Washington to coordinate non-broadcast facilities grants for NTIA.

Fed Board Member and Atlanta City Councilmember, James Bond testified with Jay April, Nov. 1, before Connecticut Public Utilities Control Board about effects of Times-Mirror cable/newspaper cross-ownership on Hartford.

Independents in Vermont were called together Sept. 17, by Ann McIntosh, Goddard College and Boston, and created the Vermont Independent Film and Video Guild, Inc. Borup was elected President.

Lyndon, Vermont State College received \$70,000 NTIA grant to construct micro-wave link and production facility, called LINC, to join the St. Johnsbury TV Co-op in originating live programming on cable in Northern Vermont. Serving on the LINC Board is Sharon Goldenberg who recently traveled to Montreal to speak on local programming and attend a Canadian Film Board conference on women and media.

Sue Castle, Montreal, helped Tom Borup, Image Co-op, with a video workshop for Vermont high school teachers Oct. 27, and will help Tom plan state humanities-funded conference on effects of television on culture.

Tom Borup

Central States

East Lansing Gears Up For NFLCP Convention

Activists at all of the East Lansing video access centers were very excited to hear that the NFLCP Board of Directors had chosen this city as the site of the next NFLCP National Convention. All are promising to help out as much as possible to make the event a big success. Planning and organizing of the convention is already underway.

One of the East Lansing access centers, at the local high school, has just received a \$250,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The funds were made available through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title IV-C in a three-year contract to produce videotapes to meet the professional development needs of the greater Lansing area teachers, using the hardware in existence at the school's video center.

A consortium of public access users recently got a grant from the East Lansing Cable Communications Commission (which gets its funds from the cable company's franchise fee) to buy a color portapac for use by all. Until this, all non-studio video in town had been black-and-white.

One of the most popular series on the East Lansing public access channel, "TeeVee Trivia", a zany parody of TV game shows, ran its "3rd Annual Frogbite Telethon" in September. The telethon garnered "pledges" adding up to \$975,000.

New coordinators of access in Ann Arbor, David Upton and Linc Yaco, are trying to get community programming off the ground again in that city.

Randy Van Dalsen

Southeast

Canadians Take Atlanta Franchise; Access Atlanta Plans Conferences

The transfer of Atlanta's cable franchise from Georgia Cablevision, Inc., a subsidiary of Cox Broadcasting, to Cable Atlanta, Inc., a subsidiary of Cablecasting LTD. of Canada, has been approved by the city council.

Cox was forced to divest itself of Georgia Cablevision because of judgments on suits brought against them by local ACLU and NAACP for media monopoly. Cox also owns the Atlanta Journal-Constitution and the NBC affiliate WSB TV-Radio.

Georgia Cablevision did little to encourage public access in its eight years as Atlanta's sole cable operator. The system has only a few thousand subscribers in the city.

Warner had also applied for a new franchise but was rejected in favor of Cable Atlanta.

NFLCP Board member, Councilman James Bond, has predicted that pending amendments to the contract between the city and Cable Atlanta assure the entire city will be wired in five years and will have a model public access system.

In addition, if the merger of Cox Broadcasting and General Electric is approved by the FCC, a national foundation will be set up in Atlanta for the purpose of increasing the participation of the disadvantaged and minorities in electronic media. Atlanta Media Project (AMP), will be a granting agency and will fund access centers in Atlanta.

NFLCP's Hometown USA Video Festival was shown in Atlanta October 9-15. Sponsored by the City of Atlanta, Access Atlanta, Independent Media Artists of Georgia, ETC. (IMAGE), and the Atlanta College of Art, the program was shown during the evenings at IMAGE and the Atlanta College of Art.

Response was enthusiastic and helped greatly in drawing attention to the possibilities of alternative programming. Access Atlanta also sponsored taping for the Access America project at a recent AA advisory board meeting. Further taping will be done at other locations.

Access Atlanta is helping to plan a national conference on cable and the arts for the fall of 1980. The conference will concern many facets of the new technologies and the arts.

Access Atlanta is also planning to host a Southeast Region NFLCP meeting in March.

Ben Davis

West Coast

California Deregulates in Trade for Access Channels, Funds

On September 28, Governor Jerry Brown signed conditional statewide cable rate deregulation legislation in California — AB 699. Under the bill, California cable systems which file for exemption from local rate regulation must agree to provide a minimum number of community service channels for use by local community groups, educational groups, state and local government.

In addition, deregulated systems must agree to contribute 50 cents per subscriber per year to a soon-to-be established "Foundation for Community Service Channels". The Foundation will make grants to local users to produce programming on the community channels.

The Bill contains a sunset provision of January 1, 1984.

What does this mean for community programmers? To find out the Region hosted a conference Nov. 10 and 11. The first day featured a panel discussion on "Community Programming after AB 699". Monroe Price, an attorney retained by the cable industry and responsible for the drafting AB 699, participated.

Open Channel, Capitola, CA, made their debut September 5, and have developed diverse community support for their programming efforts.

San Diego has obtained credit to purchase some additional portable equipment. Last report from Manuel Gonzalez, Fresno, CA, 57 hours a week of community affairs, consumer, children's, and bilingual programming were being produced.

Struggles still continue with some unresolved issues in San Jose, Pacifica, San Diego . . .

Constance H. Carlson

Midwest

Madison Education Conference Success; Region Holds Chicago Meeting November 10

The Midwest Region of the NFLCP gained over 30 new members at the Educational Uses of Cable Television conference coordinated by Carol Brown Eilber at the University of Wisconsin-Extension in Madison, Sept. 25-26.

Over 200 participants were particularly interested in information about franchising, organizing, programming sources, working with their cable operators and building area-wide networks. Ralph Lee Smith keynoted the two-day event.

To spread the word among Iowa educators, Gary Wade, Iowa State University at Ames, is planning a one-day workshop on education and cable for next March.

Dubuque Community Access Television (DCAT) is using a truckload of new equipment thanks to their cable operator and city cable commission. Teleprompter recently acquired two color cameras and a Sony 2860 editing system which they're sharing with public access.

And the Dubuque Cable Commission has just purchased three color cameras and VHS decks along with a Panasonic playback deck for DCAT. DCAT has just elected a new president, Don Mayer.

The Minnesota Arts Board has received an NEA grant to hire a video and film expert. Marion Peters-Angelica will be helping non-profit groups and organizations write grants to the Arts Board to do video and film projects.

The Madison Community Access Center and the Cable Commissions in Sun Prairie, Monona, and McFarland have been awarded a \$2700 grant from the Wisconsin Arts Board to present four workshops with visiting video artists and experts.

The Midwest Regional Meeting of NFLCP was held in Chicago on Nov. 10 and 11. The Chicago Editing Center hosted our conference and the Citizen's Committee on the Media sent an announcement to its 1200 members.

Anne Davis, Minnesota Cable Communications Board, is coordinating a workshop on franchising. Drew Shaffer (Iowa City), Justin Galler (Dubuque), Rosemary Lehman (Monona), and a representative from the Madison Access Center will talk about developing community programming.

Margie Nicholson

InfoMatchup

Bulletin

Over 30 leaders of the citizen-media movement have united in a network called the Citizens Communications Speakers Bureau. The bureau is a public education project of the National Citizens Committee for Broadcasting, although speakers do not represent NCCB. Speakers include Pluria Marshall, head of the National Black Media Coalition; Kathy Bonk, Director of the National Organization for Women's Media Task Force; Francisco Lewels, Chair of the Communications Department at the University of Texas-El Paso; and Lydia Bragger, head of the Gray Panther's Media Watch. For more information, contact Susan Masling, NCCB, PO Box 12038, Washington, DC 20005

The Corporation for public Broadcasting, in a recent Variety article, announced the setting aside of \$1,000,000 for the production and development of minority programming. It is soliciting proposals and will devise a formula for grants to match public TV station contributions. For info: John Lorentz, 475 L'Enfant Plaza, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20024.

Black Entertainment Television (BET) is in the process of establishing a network to exhibit Black TV programming that it acquires to cable television subscribers across the country. BET is interested in licensing Black programming (tape/film) for exhibition on an advertiser-supported basis, particularly entertainment-type programming, in-

cluding "docu-drama", rather than educational or politically oriented programs. For further info, contact: Bob Johnson, President, BET, 3544 Brandywine St., NW, Washington, DC 20008.

For people in the Chicago area, the Uptown Community Video Project is the place to go for assistance in community productions. The UCVP has an extensive Community Video Productions Library and is coordinating a special project with the Chicago Alternative Schools Network. For info: Uptown Community Video Project, 1105 W Lawrence, Chicago, Ill. 60640.

The Boston Film / Video Foundation, founded by independent filmmakers and video artists, is an information and equipment resource center. BF / VF holds workshops in film and video and is an equipment access center. Membership is \$15 yearly. For info: Boston Film / Video Foundation, 39 Brighton Avenue, Allston, Mass. 02134.

Publications

Telecommunications Policy and the Citizen, edited by Timothy Haight, is a series of articles criticizing communications policy from the point of view of the citizen and consumer. Published by Praeger Publishers the book contains an introduction by Nicholas Johnson.

Keeping Your Eye on Television by New York Times critic, Les Brown, describes the media reform movement and discusses the need of government regulation of the cable industry. The 84 page, \$4.95 book, published by the United Church of Christ's Pilgrim Press is available at bookstores.

The Cable Communications Board of the State of Minnesota has published **Minnesota Cable Communications and Local Self Determination**, a practical guide for communities that want to announce their own communications needs and plan their own cable communications services. For free copies of this needs assessment guide contact: The Cable Communications Board, Department of Administration, State of Minnesota, 500 Rice Street, St. Paul, Minnesota 55103.

Other Voices in Broadcasting-The Evolution of New Forms of Local Programming in Canada by Jean McNulty of the Telecommunications Research Group, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, British Columbia, is an informative study of the development and existence of local programming produced and distributed within the Canadian broadcasting system during the past 12 years. Available from Simon Fraser University.



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